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The Port of New York.

In his letter to Mayor GAYNOR transmitting the report of Chief Engineer CHARLES W. STANFORD of the Department of Docks and Ferries on "Physical Characteristics of European Seaports" Commissioner CALVIN TOMKINS says:

"Heretofore the policy of New York and of most American seaports has been to build separate docks without relation to each other as regards construction or use. The policy which the city has now entered upon contemplates the organization of the port as a whole with a view to correlating the several parts and planning each district for its best natural use."

"The essential feature in each of these reports [to the Mayor from the Commissioner of Docks and Ferries] is a railroad parallel to the waterfront connecting the docks and warehouses with each other, and with possible factory sites in the rear planned for industrial development."

"It is intended that each of these terminals, including as long a stretch of waterfront as is locally available, shall be made accessible for car floats and steamers, with the ultimate expectation of connecting them together by freight tunnels under the harbor waters."

"Any such general plan can be carried out only by the city itself and involves a large degree of public control here, as at other seaports. Private cooperation will necessarily follow about in proportion as the public spirit of the city shall provide the opportunities."

Turning to Mr. STANFORD's report the reader will find that this scheme of industrial encouragement through Government enterprise in cooperation with private capital is successfully practised at all the European ports which are described therein, many of them far inferior in natural advantages to New York, and some of them with serious disadvantages which they have overcome. Railroad tracks are laid the entire length of the piers. Travelling cranes aid in the discharge and loading of cargoes. Physical connections between the wharves and the land transportation systems are carefully provided. Each port endeavors to excel the others in the facilities it offers for commerce, to the benefit of all concerned.

The needs and possibilities of the port of New York are set forth clearly in Commissioner TOMKINS's letter. The feasibility of the comprehensive plan of development he suggests is proved in Mr. STANFORD's report. There is information enough in these documents to spur the community to an immediate determination to build on the waterfront not only what business actually requires to-day, but structures that will make the city invincible for all time in the struggle for commercial supremacy.

The Fate of Dr. Wiley.

Various organizations interested in the pure food law are giving Mr. TART advice in the matter of the charges against Dr. HARVEY W. WILEY, the chief chemist of the Department of Agriculture. Is the doctor to receive "condign punishment" or be simply reprimanded for excess of zeal in engaging Dr. HENRY H. RUSBY as pharmacognosist at an unlawful rate of compensation? The Homopathic Medical Society of Pennsylvania at its meeting in Bedford Springs this week did not touch the technical question involved in the charge against the chief chemist, but it adopted this resolution:

"That it is the sense of this meeting that the removal of Dr. HARVEY W. WILEY from his position as chief chemist of the United States Department of Agriculture would be a calamity to the nation and a direct blow to the health of every citizen."

It was voted to send a copy of the resolution to President TART, Attorney-General WICKERHAM and Secretary JAMES WILSON. The President must have received similar expressions of opinion, similar protests, by the score, perhaps by the hundreds. There are no doubt millions of people who believe that the removal of the chief chemist would be "a calamity to the nation and a direct blow to the health of every citizen." Of course what the society in Pennsylvania really means by this strenuous language is that Dr. WILEY fought hard and triumphantly for the pure food law and has done his "honest best" to enforce it, although frequently thwarted by official stupidity, envy and malice. We believe all this, although we also believe that the removal of Dr. WILEY would not necessarily be "a calamity to the nation."

It certainly would not be "a direct blow to the health of every citizen," for that would imply that the President was not in favor of the enforcement of the pure food law and had got rid of Dr. WILEY for that reason.

President TART will undoubtedly decide the case on its merits. He will take into account the fact that Dr. WILEY acted for the best interests of the service, although technically he may have been at fault. The President will

consider the peculiar behavior and the obstructive methods of Solicitor McCABE and Dr. DUNLAP, associate chemist of the bureau. Mr. TART will weigh Secretary WILSON's encomiums against his strictures—surely the balance is in Dr. WILEY's favor. Finally, Mr. TART will review the chief chemist's valuable services in the cause of legislation to prevent the adulteration of foods, solid and liquid. It is more likely to be benign than "condign punishment."

The German "Pourboire."

The latest despatches from Berlin, which agree in announcing the approach of a final settlement of the Moroccan question, are naturally silent upon the specific details of the negotiation, while declaring that the main points, that which has to do with the German recognition of a French protectorate in Morocco and that which defines the extent of compensation Germany is to have for such a recognition, are already practically disposed of.

If precise information concerning the German "compensation"—"pourboire" and "trinkgeld"—are the ironic terms used by British and French journals—is lacking, much interesting and fairly convincing conjecture concerning the character of the proposal M. CAMBON, the French Ambassador, carried to Berlin as the final French offer is supplied by the latest European newspapers which have reached this side of the Atlantic.

If these journals, several of which speak with semi-official authority, are correct, the French offer largely exceeds anything hitherto reported on this side of the world as either likely or possible. In fact it is the unanimous testimony of these accounts that the French have consented to the practical surrender of a very large portion of the territories which in French colonial reports are grouped under the title of L'Afrique Equatoriale Française.

The French offer as described by the Temps consists of all that portion of the Congo colony which lies between the eastern boundary of the German Kamerun and the Belgian Congo Free State, together with about half the territory between the northeastern portion of the Kamerun and the Anglo-Egyptian frontier in the province Bahr El Gazel. The new German frontier would thus follow the Shari River from Lake Tchad to Fort Crampel and then cross the narrow divide between the Shari and the Congo valleys and follow the Ubanghi from Bangui to the confluence of that river with the Sangha, which flows south-east from Kamerun.

As the colonial divisions of Africa now stand it is possible to go on French territory from the Mediterranean to the Congo. Such a cession as the foregoing would change this situation and reduce the portion of the colony of the Congo which remained French to the level of a coast territory bounded on the north by German Kamerun and on the east by Belgian Congo Free State. As for the French territories between Kamerun and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, they would be entirely cut off from the coast.

The same journals, in declaring that the German demands included all that France was prepared to concede, in addition included a considerable section of the northern half of the French territory lying between the Congo and the Atlantic and forming the hinterland of the small Spanish enclave of Guinea. Further it was agreed by all these newspapers that the Germans demanded the French reversionary rights to this Spanish territory. The difference between the two proposals, it will be seen, while considerable is not sufficient to make any break likely.

To balance in part such great concessions on the French side there were also suggestions made that the Germans were prepared to cede to the French a considerable portion of German Togoland, the German colony which lies to the west of Dahomey and touches the Gulf of Guinea, and also that triangle of the Kamerun which touches Lake Tchad, thus bringing the French at this point in touch with the British frontier and opening a new road for the revictualing of their Shari territories.

The area surrendered by France, if such an agreement were made, has been variously estimated; it is probably not smaller than that of either of the nations concerned. But it is in only a slight degree actually occupied and its commercial development must await very material improvement by the means of transportation. Nor is there at the present time any accurate knowledge of the commercial future of the region, which has been thoroughly explored only along the shores of its three great rivers, the Sangha, the Ubanghi and the Shari.

To give this territory in return for complete possession of Morocco is not a bad French bargain. The comparison in values between the two portions of Africa is absurd. The Congo can never conceivably rival Morocco.

The Champion.

No opponent of direct nominations can refuse to Governor DIX that sympathy which he already deserves. The shouts of admiration at his "gallant" stand for direct primaries had hardly ceased before there began the new tumult of denunciation directed against a Governor who was in reality urging only a "fake" direct primary law for base partisan advantage.

Governor DIX is only a mild direct primary champion. He wants a direct primary law, but he doesn't wish one that extends to State officers. Will such lukewarm, circumscribed support satisfy the direct primary agitator, who not merely wants direct nominations applied to all political offices of every sort but is already well forward in his campaign for the recall and the referendum? We think not.

It could be well for the Hon. JOHN A. DIX to remember that not all the fierce battles and "near" victories of his predecessor saved Governor HUGHES from final damnation, so far as the real friends of direct primaries were concerned, the moment he consented to accept a little,

which he didn't get, for the whole that he had no chance of getting.

It is possible that Governor DIX believes he is a sincere friend of direct nominations, but no direct nominator suspects it for a moment. On the contrary the programme for the direct forces is to drive the Governor as far as they can and then abuse him for not going further. The real denunciation which Governor DIX will have to endure will not come from the enemies of direct nominations, but from the friends, from those champions who regard moderation as the worst offence of any public official.

Governor DIX will not procure the passage of a direct nominations bill that need arouse the apprehension of a single opponent of the system. But he is going to get a little valuable experience which, it is now plainly apparent, he needs sadly.

Another Triumph of "The People."

Our esteemed namesake in Baltimore finds happiness in reciting editorially this tale of progress in Nebraska:

"Omaha, with a population of 121,000, has adopted the commission plan of government by a vote of more than two to one. 'The Inauguration of the commission plan will give Omaha an opportunity to meet the demand for improved city government.' The people, however, must remember that they get better government only by electing competent and trustworthy men to the responsible positions."

Is our brother or in Baltimore aware of the delicious unconscious irony of the Omaha Bee's admonition to "the people"? The vote of Omaha on the commission form of government stood: Yeas, 5,341; nays, 2,345. "More than two to one," as our brother or puts it, magnificently. So strong was the demand for improved city government in Omaha that more than 17,000 voters did not take the trouble to vote. Voting, 7,686; voting aye, 5,341; not to be dragged to the polls, 17,000 odd.

A mighty rising of "the people!"

The narrator of damages caused by hailstones and of the size of the stones that fell has just had a mark set for him by some travellers in the Pyrenees. In the London Times they tell with considerable detail and the necessary amount of proof their experience in a mountain storm which came upon them without warning:

"It was as if night was devouring day before our very eyes; a night, too, of tempest and torn and trailing clouds, of storm, smoke and thunder. Midway in the darkness was 'the clear out straight line of cloud which invariably tells of hail.' Except for the shelter of a small tree they were exposed to the storm's fury, and when they examined the hailstones they found they were of the average size of marbles, with a scattering here and there of much larger stones, 'as large as golf balls.' This, however, was merely the prelude; the real storm came after they had reached their tents. 'Suddenly the whole land was bombarded by great hailstones as large as lawn tennis balls.' These fell with deafening roar on the canvas of the tent, and it seemed only a matter of a few seconds for us to be battered into the earth, tent and all. An India rubber ball in front of their shelter, 'with its sides beaten down in places, was half full of things like white cricket balls.'"

When the storm had finally passed the mountains round were white with the hailstones, "which lay over everything like a sheet, so that in an hour summer had become winter." The hail was weighed; "six stones went to the kilo." The size was that of "a tennis ball and almost uniform." Seventy sheep were killed on the heights above the travellers' shelter, and in a neighboring valley thirty-five cows and some mules and the body of a child that had been wandering in the mountains "were brought down by a stream." In comparison with this the stories from Oklahoma and the West of storms that felled trees and laid the grain fields low, of hail as "big as hens' eggs" or "a man's fist," seem modest and of no consequence.

Uncle JOE CANNON is apparently fearful that his bout at golf in Admiral WELLS's district in Massachusetts will cost him votes at home. This is his account:

"You see, I was spending some time with Jones Wagon, and one day he wanted to play golf, so I grabbed my club and went around the hole. So help me, I did not go any further than that."

It was far enough to constitute Mr. CANNON an amateur. He came to scoff and he remained to play. He might as well have gone the full eighteen holes and faced his angry constituents with the audacity that has served him so well in his battles with a despised Democracy. Five holes to a Danville audience are as atrocious as eighteen. The crime consisted in associating with people in knickerbockers and turned up "pants" and knocking a small ball about a field with a long stick under the impression that skill was required to do it, and that it was man's work, like tree chopping and dog catching.

We fear that Mr. CANNON has earned the contempt of the horny handed automobilists of Kankakee and Vermilion. He had better go home at once and start golf clubs all over the district. To correct the impression that any one can drive, approach and put, swing the brassie and manipulate the niblick, and that golf is not a real man's game, would seem to be the veteran's only salvation.

Wooden Shoes in the United States. From Daily Consular and Trade Reports. A shipment of 600 cases of wooden shoes, containing several thousand pairs, has just been forwarded from Amsterdam to Grand Rapids, Mich. It is stated that the United States is the best foreign customer of the Netherlands for this article of manufacture, many hundreds of pairs of wooden shoes being worn in Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey and a few other States. It is claimed that there is more wooden footwear in Chicago, Grand Rapids, or Holland, Mich., than in the city of Amsterdam. Paterson, N. J., St. Louis, Mo., Lancaster county, Nebraska, Marquette county, Iowa, and numerous other smaller settlements import large quantities of this practical article of dress every year.

Growth of Some Dominion Cities.

From the Ottawa Citizen. The statement that Vancouver has now 115,000 population will serve to show the tremendous growth of the West. Twenty years ago the city published the census figures showing that Vancouver had a population of 15,000 and commented on the fact that in the last ten years from 1881 to 1891 it had grown from nothing to 15,000. In the middle West the figures are equally eloquent. In Saskatchewan the city of Moose Jaw in 1901 had some 1,200 population. To-day it totals nearly 20,000. Saskatchewan's population in 1901 was less than 500. To-day it boasts nearly 100,000. Lethbridge grew from 2,000 in 1901 to 11,000 in 1911.

The Breaking Clouds on the Massachusetts Coast.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—This morning there was a strong gale from the southwest, with driving rain. For some hours after sunrise the sky was everywhere leaden and dull with rain clouds. Then about 11 o'clock, the lead tint lightened and began to lose softly; and presently a patch of pure blue scarcely larger than a handkerchief appeared, jagged and irregular, and continually obscured and disclosed by the flying clouds.

But the blue patch grew, and began to be traced with swirling lines of lace, the lower veins caught by the sun. Here and there below the blue and nearer the horizon the more solid clouds turned from their dull lead to beautiful harmonies of dark blue, the distant mountains of the stormy seas, and now the more powerful sun turned the crests of the clouds near the zenith to snowy peaks, like glaciers, across which the blue sky of lower borders mist. Against the dull clouds of the western horizon the distant islands still showed almost black, but the sun streaked the sea between with bands of intense white, and the storm seemed to be past.

Quickly and unexpectedly the sea broke masses of dark clouds again over all the sky, the blue and the white were hid, and the veils of lace vapor were lost in the general masses of the clouds. Soon, however, the same gale, shifting its compass, swept the dark clouds to the east, the sun again broke through, the dark heavens grew lighter, and the storm was past.

DAVID WALBRIDGE.

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7.—In a special article in the year book of the Department of Agriculture for 1910 the statement is made that "the American farmer is beginning to realize that the powerful influence of consolidated capital has been the cause of the tremendous industrial progress of the last generation and is beginning to take a greater interest in the possibilities of cooperative action when applied to his own problems."

Cooperation in the production and distribution of farm, field and orchard products is by the very nature of those industries a matter of vastly greater complexity than is the combination of a group of manufacturing establishments. Thus far, according to this official report, cooperation has been more highly developed in fruit growing than in any other agricultural industry in America. There are now several hundred associations of fruit growers in the Western States, and a number in the central West and along the Atlantic coast. A California organization alone is engaged in distributing yearly \$15,000,000 worth of fruit to 6,000 producers. Through this agency fruit is sent to all parts of the United States and to a number of foreign countries. It is known as the California Fruit Growers Exchange and is said to handle about 90 per cent. of the citrus fruits of the State. The Florida organization of citrus fruit growers, the Georgia organization of peach growers and associations of apple growers in the Northwest are other illustrations of successful and profitable cooperation.

The special purposes for which these associations are formed are the purchase of supplies used in producing and marketing the crops, standardization in grading and packing the fruit, the sale of the product of many individual orchards through a central agency under an approved and adopted system, and the prevention of disastrous competition by bringing about an equitable distribution throughout the country. The general scheme is in effect the substitution of collectivism for individualism, a system approved by many when it is applied to labor or to the farm, and condemned when adopted in manufacture or trade. There are some who do not clearly see why the pooling of their interests and their products by farmers or orchardists is to be regarded as meritorious, while similar combinations for the same purpose effected by manufacturers or by transportation companies are to be regarded as little short of criminal. The eminent desirability of such organizations should be more fully recognized than it is, but the distinction now made between lines of industry should be broken down. These associations of fruit growers unquestionably tend to improve and extend their industry.

So far as prices of fruit are concerned, the consumers have as yet gained nothing as a result of the growers' associations. For the last two or three years the wholesale prices of fruit have averaged about 50 per cent. more than the average of ten or fifteen years ago. There has been on the whole an improvement in the quality of the supply, but it is impossible to say how far this is due to the associations. How widely and how rapidly the cooperative system will spread in the domain of agriculture and its allied industries in the near future is not to be predicted with safety. That it will cover a wider range than it now does and that it will find a stronger basis than it now has may be regarded as inevitable.

GETTING RID OF FLIES.

Great Execution Can Be Done by Snapping Them With Strips of Elastic.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The placards which the Board of Health has been issuing during the last few days warning people of the danger of flies and suggesting methods of extermination are so unattractive that I am tempted to describe my summer experience with flies.

While up in the middle of the State early in the summer I was on a farm where about twenty cows were being milked while boys were brushing the swarms of flies off the beasts with their hands. It occurred to me that if the boys could do this with strips of elastic they would soon kill them all, and as flies do not go far the barnyards would soon be nearly free of them. I armed the boys with elastic bands which I had cut in half and in about half an hour the flies were almost gone. The boys kept at it as a sport for two or three nights, keeping count to see which was most successful, and when I came away they were complaining because they found so few flies to shoot. The neighbors soon heard of the success and if there were a few of them that had rid their houses of flies in the same manner. The idea grew with me so that on my return I soon had my house free of the flies. I have found my little elastic, which I now keep in my pocket, to be a most useful and convenient thing.

I have had no trouble in destroying both flies and mosquitoes in this way. Rubber bands about one-quarter of an inch thick, cut in half, and I was able to kill the best of the flies. I had previously chased flies and mosquitoes about my bedrooms with a stick of birch, and with little effect on the pests.

I have tried the solution of bicarbonate of potash and sugar dissolved in water, recommended by the Board of Health, with sticky fly paper. I have had many sheets about my house and in a week would some of the flies be gone, but the paper was sometimes none at all. Such paper is likely to stick to one's hands or clothing and become very annoying.

Since my farm experience I have spoken to several people about killing flies with elastic bands and have shown them the method and how effectively it has worked. If the elastic is cut in half, it will be found to be a wide and the flies are shot obliquely; they will not smear the walls, table or dishes.

NEW YORK, September 6.

W. H. GILLIS.

A Georgia Reactionary.

From the Macon Telegraph. It will in our opinion be no less than a national misfortune if any great American party should write the initiative, referendum and recall to its platform. It is earnestly to be hoped that in spite of the activity of its more radical leaders the Democratic party is still conservative enough and sound enough to refuse to take such a step.

Protection of the Ear Drums in Surf Bathing.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: In THE SUN of September 6 I had a "tip" from a druggist on the use of the ear drums in swimming. I am, a devotee of sea bathing and one who likes to have his head under water almost as much as above it. I contribute an improvement. Don't use cotton at all. Get from the druggist a package of the fluffy lamb's wool prepared like cotton, pull out enough for a good sized wad, roll it into a ball between the palms of your hands and stuff it hard into the ear. With both ears thus waterproofed and resting wool you have nothing to fear from water in the head by that route.

When the head is submerged, however, water is bound to get in through the nose, and when left in the cavities "behind the ears" is likely to cause trouble. For some time I have used nose, but as you rise to the surface always with your wind out hard through your nose, with your mouth firmly closed, and so derive benefit from a head clearing douche.

JOHN WORTH.

NEW YORK, September 6.

Loge and Foss.

From the Idaho. Let me put it to you as a man of sense. If you were given your choice of the two things and could have either but not both, which would you choose, a book of poems or a pair of trousers?

FLOOD AND FAMINE IN THE YANGTZE VALLEY.

The news which has been coming to us of late from the Yangtze valley of China is a fearful mortality, the ruin of crops and the impending famine in the provinces of Liang Kiang and Anhui in China is by no means unexpected. It has been known that the floods in the valley of the Yangtze River were very serious. They extended as far up the river as Hankow, and the cities west of Hankow and at the head of steam navigation. Conservative estimates of the monetary loss are 20,000,000 taels, or approximately \$11,200,000.

Neither is there any surprise over the news that food riots have broken out in Shanghai and other towns and cities. The scarcity is very great and very hard on the poor. Unfortunately, besides, it is not altogether caused by the natural visitation. At least in the cities and big towns it is largely due to grain speculation, deliberate and in absolute good faith. Everywhere the grain laws are very strict, but it is hopeless to attempt to enforce them when the leading men in the city are the grain speculators. It is true that we have thousands of lives and that a great many who would not live to get the Government aid, but I believe our time and money could be much more effectively expended in the effort to root out the speculation evil.

The same conditions prevail in all parts of China. Grain speculation, as the Chinese told us repeatedly, was at the bottom of the fierce riots in Changsha last year. The people know that starvation is deliberately forced upon them to enhance the profits of a clique. They have no practical redress. Cornering the people's food is nominally against the law, but the law is a dead letter. So when the suffering becomes too great for endurance the mob takes control until it is put down by the troops.

Facing the new prospects of famine with the certainty of famine appeals to Europe and America for relief. Occidental residents of China are raising serious questions as to the obligations which the situation presents. "Foreign help," says one writer, "should be sternly withheld until the Government takes some steps toward removing the cause of the disaster. It is not a question of 'conservancy.' According to the best opinion nothing can bring any security to the valley of the Yangtze short of a comprehensive scheme of dredging, canalization and embankment to regulate the flow of the river and carry off the rush of waters in flood time. This, of course, will be enormously expensive and will involve employing the best European expert talent, but no matter what the cost it is the duty of the Chinese Government to undertake it, ceasing to shift its burden upon other countries and acting to stop the mortality and the misery among its own people."

So far as famine relief from without is concerned, there is an insistent cry from China that it simply corrupts the official classes. It may seem incomprehensible, but the Chinese people are "famine grifts," the misappropriation of funds for graft, is an undeniable scandal, although almost difficult to fix upon the authors. Says the Hankow writer quoted above:

Every Chinese seems to regard this foreign fund as legitimate prey. It debauches the employees; it corrupts the officials generally. It is almost impossible to have any one punished for graft because all think they are entitled to all they can grab. I cannot but believe that it is bad for missionary work and worse for foreign trade. It is a constant source of disgust and cheating every two or three years.

It is admitted that more is being done this year by Chinese agencies than on any former occasion, but in presence of the enormous loss the total of relief to date seems almost negligible. Early in August, when the magnitude of the floods was foreseen, they have by no means subsided as yet and the estimates of damage may still be greatly magnified. The Viceroy Chang-Jen-chun of the Liang Kiang and Anhui provinces was ordered to make a study of means for relief of the people in the future. Simultaneously a donation of 50,000 taels was made in the name of the Emperor, and the Government appropriated 200,000 more for relief, but in presence of losses exceeding \$100,000,000 this expenditure of \$250,000 for the disaster seems almost derisory. Late despatches show that as the extent of the disaster is realized other relief measures are being taken, but the price of rice is so high that the people cannot even buy any more rice, and it is only adequate for food consumption by about a third of the people in the neighborhood of Shanghai, even the action of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in borrowing half a million dollars Mexican, or about \$250,000, to import food from Hongkong is plainly the most meagre expedient.

It seems inevitable that the usual demands for assistance will soon be sent out by the missionaries from the afflicted regions. No doubt the customary generous response will be made from this country and England. But of very little use will it be, for the usual field for diplomatic effort in bringing the authorities at Peking to a sense of their duty and goading them into taking immediate and effective steps to prevent the recurrence of these calamities. China has practically unlimited credit at present for money to be spent for crop improvement, and in the economy of national wealth that would be effected several millions judiciously spent on the controlling of this river would assuredly afford as large a return to the Government as any of the railroad projects now so highly favored at Peking.

The Glory of Paterson.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The Paterson discussion interests and informs. It is a discussion of the form of government operating in that happy community. It is manifestly a success, but I fail to gather from the references an idea of what it is like. Is it unique, or at least uncommon? It seems to be accomplishing what the corruptors for to accomplish. Will somebody please give us the plan and specification?

PROVIDENCE, R. I., September 7.

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DAVID WALBRIDGE.

At the Library.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I asked her for a book on birds. She stared at me with comprehension. With meekness I explained my words. "Oh, hold!" quoth she with condescension.

NEW YORK, September 7.

F. M.

THE MAN OF FIFTY.

His Sudden Discovery of the Fact (If It Is One) That He Is No Longer a Child.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The blue has fallen. No, I have not lost my health, friends or money. At the moment those things would seem minor disasters. That which happened will cause the old to smile in reminiscent compassion and the young to look pityingly incredulous.

To-day, for the first time I heard myself referred to as "old." I am fifty, unmarried, and have always been considered good looking. At thirty I looked twenty, and at forty I was often thought to be thirty. What wonder, then, that I believed perpetual youth abided with me?

My life has been fairly clean, judged by conventional standards. I have indulged in numerous violent flirtations. I have loved only once.

As I passed through my third, fourth and fifth decades I failed to realize my own attitude as to the men of this world, and fifty; the point of view had changed utterly. It is true that I sometimes smiled indulgently at those of my early friends, men and women, who had married. I saw them getting fat, gray and leathery; setting down their heads on their shoulders and routing the opera once a week, bridge on a certain evening, perfunctory interest in charities and such things. I pitied them. I saw their children grow up, and had a vague feeling that I belonged to that second generation rather than to the first. I realized now that the children had not been shared that state of mind.

That I have unconsciously feared the approach of age for the last dozen years I am now convinced. Else why that feverish struggle to avoid forming habits of life, a struggle which I have called "the work of habits"? Why that clinging to practices that belonged to my youth, games, early morning walks, and the like? Why that to the younger girls? As to dress alone I think that instinctively I refrained from the excesses that may be observed among young men, but my taste had always been rather sober.

And now I have come to the parting of the ways. I am possessed by bitterness, but I am no fool and morbidity cannot enter into my mind. I have decided to live through middle life to old age. So farewell,